

WAR DEPARTMENT  
Barksdale Field, Louisiana  
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

ACCIDENT No. Padu 069  
45-7-18-11

88-015

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place Barksdale Field, Louisiana (2) Date 18 July 1944 (3) Time 07:49 4  
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model A-26B-5-DT 229 (5) A. F. No. 43-22254 (6) Station Barksdale Field, La.  
Organization: (7) 3rd BS & 3rd AF (8) Barksdale Field RTU (MB) Squadron "T"  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

3 3B PERSONNEL 331 BAS 8807

DUTY	NAME (Last name first)	RATING	SERIAL No.	RANK	PERSONNEL CLASS	BRANCH	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND	RESULT TO PERSONNEL	USE OF PARACHUTE
(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
CC	<u>Eggleston, Matthew L.</u>		<u>6987687</u>	<u>T/Sgt.</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>A.C.</u>	<u>3rd AF</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>No</u>
1st AI	<u>Burson, Ralph E.</u>		<u>35043994</u>	<u>T/Sgt.</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>A.C.</u>	<u>3rd AF</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>No</u>
1st AI	<u>Groover, William L.</u>		<u>35350430</u>	<u>Sgt.</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>A.C.</u>	<u>3rd AF</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>No</u>
1st AI	<u>Pondolfino, Frank L.</u>		<u>32369845</u>	<u>Sgt.</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>A.C.</u>	<u>3rd AF</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>No</u>
1st	<u>Roberts, Cecil W.</u>			<u>Jgt</u>	<u>20</u>			<u>major</u>	<u>11</u>

*non flying*  
*8-7-46*

(20) Pondolfino, Frank L. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~  
Pilot not involved.  
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)  
Assigned (25) 3 3B (26) 331 BAS (27) (Squadron) (28) (Station)  
Attached for flying (29) 3rd BS (30) (Group) (31) (Squadron) (32) 8807-A (Station)  
Original rating (33) none (34) (Rating) (Date) Present rating (35) none (36) (Rating) (Date) Instrument rating (37) none (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:  
(at the time of this accident)  
(38) This type (42) Instrument time last 6 months  
(39) This model (43) Instrument time last 30 days  
(40) Last 90 days (44) Night time last 6 months  
(41) Total (45) Night time last 30 days

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE *NF*

DAMAGE	(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>M 3</u>	<u>Damage Report Attached.</u>
(47) Engine(s) <u>None/None</u>	
(48) Propeller(s) <u>M 4 M 4</u>	

(50) Weather at the time of accident CAVU  
(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident -----  
(52) Cleared from ----- (53) To ----- (54) Kind of clearance 5  
(55) Pilot's mission 90  
(56) Nature of accident Ground Accident.  
(57) Cause of accident No safety lock pin in main gears.

(58) Was Form No. 54 submitted? No.

RESTRICTED

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

(Brief narrative of accident. Include statement of responsibility and recommendations for action to prevent repetition)

On 18 July 1944, the landing gear of an A-26B airplane No. 43-22254, collapsed while parked on the ramp in front of Hangar #10. At the time the accident occurred, one crew chief and three armorer inspectors were attempting to locate the cause of the failure of one bombay door light, and were opening the bombay doors by means of hydraulic pressure, acquired through the hand pump, to inspect the bombay door safety lock light. At the time of the accident there were no safety lock pins in the gear down locks. A complete technical report of this accident is contained in the enclosed statement by Captain George M. Booth, Jr., Group Engineering Officer. The basic cause of this accident is the lack of the positive cultivator type latch on the Douglas Tulsa A-26 airplanes, and failure to install safety lock pins in the gear down locks.

If any personnel error is to be placed for this accident, it was the responsibility of the crew chief to have safety lock pins in the gear down locks.

This was a ground accident with resultant of major injury to Sgt. Cecil L. Roberts, who was underneath the airplane to inspect the bombay door safety lock light. The damage to materiel was major.

RECOMMENDATIONS: It is recommended that some type of temporary lock be installed on the pedestal handle of all Douglas Tulsa A-26 aircraft that do not have the positive cultivator type latch.

322

*Jack P. Orbison*  
Signature JACK P. ORBISON, Capt., Air Corps.  
(Investigating Officer)

Date 29 July 1944

BARKSDALE FIELD RTU (MB)  
Office of the Operations Officer

Barksdale Field, La.,  
18 July 1944.

SUBJECT: Statement - Aircraft Accident.

TO : Whom It May Concern.

S T A T E M E N T

While standing in front of the hangar I heard the airplane (A-26B A.C. Number 43-22254) when the gear gave way. Looking around I saw the airplane settle to the ground. At first I noticed two men apparently in the act of getting out of the cockpit and in glancing around I noticed the there was a man beneath the ship near the rear edge of the Bomb Bay doors. At that time I left and went into operations to call the crash truck and ambulance.

*M. K. Eggleston*

M. K. EGGLESTON,  
T/Sgt. Squad. "T",  
Barksdale RTU (MB).

BARKSDALE FIELD RTU (MB)  
Office of the Operations Officer

Barksdale Field, La.,  
18 July 1944.

SUBJECT: Statement - Aircraft Accident.

TO : Whom It May Concern.

S T A T E M E N T

At about 0730 on the morning of 18 July 1944, Sgt Roberts asked Sgt Groover, Pondolfino and myself, S/Sgt Burson to help him locate some trouble on A-26B airplane No. 43-22254. The trouble was in the bomb bay indicator lights.

Sgt Pondolfino sat in the pilot's seat and Sgt Groover took a position to his right. I was sitting on the cannoner's seat behind Sgt Groover.

One of the bomb bay door lights failed to light. Sgt Groover and Sgt Pondolfino closed and opened the bomb bay doors. After the doors had opened, Sgt Roberts went beneath the ship to check a switch in the bomb bay. While he was in the bomb bay, the ship dropped to the ground.

I at no time touched any of the controls.

*Ralph E Burson*

R. E. BURSON,  
S/Sgt.,  
Armament Inspector.



**BARKSDALE FIELD RTU (MB)**  
Office of the Operations Officer

Barksdale Field, La.,  
18 July 1944.

SUBJECT: Statement - Aircraft Accident.

TO : Whom It May Concern.

I was called by Sgt Roberts to come out to A-26B airplane No. 43-22254 at about 0730 this morning to help find an electrical failure in the bombing equipment on the airplane.

I climbed into the airplane and sat on a metal guard in the center of the cockpit. The guard is located between the Pilot's seat and the Cannoneer's seat. The trouble was bulbs burned out of indicator lights on the cockpit dash board. So I helped install the new bulbs, and then turned on the battery switches to check the new bulbs, one failed to work, so we closed the bomb bay doors by putting the door operating handle in Close position. There was no hydraulic pressure up or indicating on the dial of the instrument panel of the plane so I pumped the doors shut checking the bulb that would not light but it still would not light. Then Sgt Roberts said to open the bomb bay doors and he would look inside the bomb bay to see if the bomb bay door safety lock light would light up when the doors were open. So I moved the bomb bay door operating handle to open position and started to operate the hydraulic pump handle. The doors were not fully open yet when the airplane lurched forward and downward.

*William L. Groover*  
WILLIAM L. GROOVER,  
Sgt, 35350430,  
Armorer Inspector.

BARKSDALE FIELD RTU (MB)  
Office of the Operations Officer

Barksdale Field, La.,  
18 July 1944.

SUBJECT: Statement - Aircraft Accident.

TO : Whom It May Concern.

S T A T E M E N T

At approximately 0730 this morning my attention was called to airplane No. 43-22254 (A-26B) by my fellow armorers, S/Sgt Burson and Sgt Groover. I immediately went over and was told that the bomb bay indicator bulbs would not light up. I was sitting in the Pilot's seat at the time of the accident. Sgt Groover and myself replaced the burned out bulbs. One bulb did not light up so we closed the bombay doors to check and see if the bulb would light up. The bulb would not work so we opened the doors by moving the bombay door handle in the open position and Sgt Groover worked the hydraulic pump handle because pressure was low. The ship collapsed while still working the hydraulic pump handle.

I certify that at no time was any other switch or mechanism touched by myself or the other men in the cockpit.

*Frank Pandolfino*  
FRANK PANDOLFINO,  
Sergeant, A.C.,  
Armorer Inspector.

HEADQUARTERS  
BARKSDALE FIELD RTU (MB)  
Office of the Engineering Officer

U-1

Barksdale Field, La.  
20 July 1944

SUBJECT: Investigation of Accidental Landing Gear Retraction on A-26B  
Airplane 43-22254.

TO: Commanding Officer, Barksdale Field RTU (MB)

1. Accidental retraction of the landing gear on A-26B Airplane 43-22254 which occurred on 18 July 1944 happened when armament personnel in the cockpit of the airplane opened the bomb bay doors and built up hydraulic pressure with the hand pump. At the time of the accident, the landing gear selector handle was in the extreme neutral position. It is not known whether the handle was in the neutral when the armament men entered the cockpit, or whether one of them moved it, but they deny having touched it.

2. There are two control handles for the landing gear selector valve. One on the valve itself at the rear of the pilot's compartment, and a remote control handle on the pilot's pedestal which is connected to the other by a system of cables and pulleys. In this case, when the handle on the pedestal was in the neutral position, the handle on the valve was approximately 1/4 inch from the solenoid pin and no hydraulic fluid would by-pass to the up line in the landing gear hydraulic system. The pedestal handle is positioned by a spring loaded ball type lock which is not positive and this lock is easily overcome by moving the main handle at the rear. In entering or leaving the cockpit, it is highly probable that the main handle could have been hit and shoved over against the solenoid pin as it was found after the accident. The photo plainly shows this position. In this position, the valve at the rear is slightly open in the landing gear up direction. This valve was installed and adjusted at the Douglas Factory and no need for check had ever arisen.

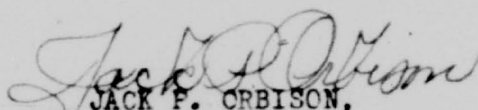
3. At the time of the accident, there was a safety pin installed in the nose gear down lock but none in the main gear down locks. The Engineering Officer's statement at the time was that the pins had been lost on a recent cross country flight and replacement pins were on order. However, there is no reason why a plain bolt or steel pin about five inches long and about 1/4 inch in diameter could have been used as a temporary lock. Such a device would be easily available.

4. Douglas Long Beach airplanes have always had a positive cultivator type of latch on the pedestal handle which would make it impossible to accidentally move the handle from the down to the neutral position. Douglas Tulsa ships have had the spring loaded catch on the pedestal handle which is anything but positive. A telegram from the Douglas Office indicates that future ships coming from Tulsa will incorporate the positive cultivator type latch.

5. The existing memorandum concerning the use of down locks on parked aircraft will eliminate ant future accidents of this type if religiously followed. All airplanes will be checked shortly to see that there is no leakage of hydraulic pressure with the selector valve in the neutral position. It would be extremely difficult to place the responsibility of this accident on any one person for the purpose of taking disciplinary action because of the factors and number of persons involved.

/s/ George M. Booth, Jr.  
GEORGE M. BOOTH, JR.  
Captain, Air Corps  
Engineering Officer

A TRUE COPY:

  
JACK F. ORBISON,  
Captain, Air Corps.



HEADQUARTERS  
BARKSDALE FIELD RTU (MB)  
Office of the Commanding Officer

A-2

Barksdale Field, La.  
19 July 1944

UNNUMBERED )  
:  
MEMORANDUM )

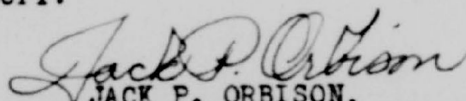
Ground Safety Landing Gear Operation

1. Landing Gear Down Locks will be installed in all aircraft immediately after being taxied back to the parking line and will remain installed until ordered removed by the Pilot, prior to take-off. Exception will be made when an airplane has been properly placed on jacks for the purpose of making a retraction check. Ground maintenance personnel will never enter the cockpit by themselves unless the down locks are installed.
2. The landing gear selector valve control handle in the cockpit will be left in the down position at all times aircraft are on the ground except during a retraction as noted above.
3. Violation of this memorandum will immediately be followed by appropriate action.
4. This memorandum will be read to all personnel and will be permanently posted on bulletin boards maintained in all department offices.

By order of Lt Colonel ANDERSON:

/s/ A. Neumaier  
A. NEUMAIER  
Major, Air Corps,  
Adjutant

A TRUE COPY:

  
JACK P. ORBISON,  
Captain, Air Corps.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR BASE  
Office of the Air Maintenance Officer  
Barksdale Field, Louisiana

SD-21

21 July 1944

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE REPORT NO. 44-90

AIRPLANE: A-26B-5-DT, AAF 43-22254, Engines, Type R-2800-27, #1. 42-2096  
#2. 42-2105

1. Subject airplane was damaged on local flying field on 18 July 1944. The following damage resulted:

- a. All main landing doors bent.
- b. Both bombay doors bent and kinked.
- c. Skin damaged on bottom of fuselage aft of bombay.
- d. Both side braces bent on nose strut.
- e. Cross member bent at forward end of nose gear nacelle.
- f. Left fore and aft former in nose gear nacelle torn.
- g. Several bomb door brackets broken.
- h. Skin kinked and bulkhead buckled at tail bumper.
- i. Skin slightly bent on bottom of lower turret.
- j. Tip broken off one blade of right propeller.
- k. Tip bent on one blade of left propeller.
- l. Skin buckled on left side of bombay under rear main spar.
- m. Hole torn in fairing strip inboard side of left engine nacelle.
- n. Skin scratched in several places on under inboard side of left wing.
- o. Skin buckled on bombay immediately under trailing edge of right wing.

2. Recommendations: Airplane be repaired by 8th Sub-Depot.

*Roger J. Ames*  
ROGER J. AMES,  
Major, Air Corps,  
Air Maintenance Officer.

Incl.

Photographs



300>E-573-G8F)(7-18-44) A-26B 42-2254



002F-573-G8F)(7-18-44) ACC. A-26B 42-2254



002G-573-G8F)(7-18-44) A-26B 42-2254



002F-573-G8F)(7-18-44) A-26B 42-2254

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR BASE  
OFFICE OF THE BASE COMMANDER  
Barksdale Field, Louisiana

E-25

31 July 1944

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Records.

TO : Chief, Flying Safety, Army Air Forces,  
Winston-Salem 1, North Carolina.

In compliance with Paragraph 1 a, Section V, Part 8, A.A.F.  
Regulation No. 62-14A, dated 28 January 1944, inclosed herewith, Form 14,  
Report of Aircraft Accident.

*W B Wright*  
Wm. B. WRIGHT,  
Colonel, Air Corps,  
Commanding.

Incl.

Form 14 (with inclosures  
attached) A-26B-5-DT air-  
plane No. 43-22254



COPY

LOG NO. 2834

ME 60 V WSAL 361 NR 16  
FROM PRICE HQ AAF WINSTON SALEM NCAR 200826Z  
TO HQS SAFETY REGION THREE OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY  
MEMPHIS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT MEMPHIS 2 TENN

GRNC

FOLLOWING MES I RELAYED TO YOU FOR YOUR INFORMATION QUOT  
FROM ANDERSON CO BARKSDALE RTU MB BARKSDALEFIELD LA 190153Z  
TO HQ AAF OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY WINSTON SALEM NCAR

GRNC

BKRTU E197 PD CITE CLEARANCE NO AAF DAH FS DASH T4 PD CITE AAF  
REGULATION 62 DASH 14A THE FOLLOWING ACCIDENT REPORT IS SUBMITTED COLON  
A/ 18 JULY 1944 AT 0947 CMA BARKSDALE FIELD CMA LOUISIANA PD  
B/ NON PILO INVOLVED PD  
C/ ARMAMENT PERSONNEL WAS IN COCKPIT OF THE AIRPLANE PARKED ON RAMP CMA  
OPENING BOMB BAY DOORS WITH THE HAND PUMP PD WHILE PUMPING THE LANDING  
GEAR RETRACTED CATCHING ONE MAN UNDER THE OPEN BOMBAYS IN THE PLANE PD  
D/ ARMA ENT GROUND MAINTENANCE PW/// PERSONHEL CMA CECIL L ROBERTS CMA SGT  
CMA AUS CMA JAF CMA SQUADRON T CMA BACKSDAE FIELD RTU PAREN MB

45-7-18-11  
6/8

PAREN CMA BARKSDALE FIELD CMA LOUISIANA CMA MULTIPLE LACERATIONS OF  
FACE CMA FRACTURE OF NOSE CMA POSSIBLE FRACTURE OF SKULL CMA FRACTURE  
OF RIGHT ANKLE CMA POSSIBLE FRACTURE OF RIGHT HIP PD  
E/ PREFLI  
E/ PREFLIGHT OF AIRPLANE PD  
F/ NO CLOUDS CMA VISIBILITY 2 MILES IN SMOKE AND HAZE CMA WIND N  
VERY SLIGHT PD  
G/ CMA AIRPLANE NUMBER 43 DASH 22254 PD  
H/ BARKSDALE FIELD CMA LOUISIANA PD  
I/ BARKSDALE FIELD CMA LOUISIANA PD  
I/ PD STRUTS CMA NACELLE DOORS CMA FUSELAGE CMA AND PROPS DAMAGED  
J/ NONE PD  
K/ TURNED OVER TO DIRECTOR OF MAINTENANCE SUPPLY CMA 331ST  
AAF BAS UNIT PAREN RTU B// MB PAREN CMA BARKSDALE FIELD CMA  
LOUISIANA PD  
L/ NONE PD  
M/ COMMANDING GENERAL AAF NOTIFIED  
N/ GROUP 1 END

UNAUOTE

322

2834 190438Z

0832Z

CS.

7-18-11

*Gene*

RECEIVED

2734

1944 JUL 17 04 38

6633

HQ. A. A. F.  
FLT. CONTROL COMD.

2734

US V DV NR11 P

FROM ANDERSON CO BARKSDALE RTU HB BARKSDALEFIELD LA 190133Z

TO HQ AAF OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY WINSTONSALEM NCAR

GRNC

ERTU E197 PD CITE CLEARANCE NO AAF DASH FS DASH T4 PD CITE AAF  
REGULATION 62 DASH 14A THE FOLLOWING ACCIDENT REPORT IS SUBMITTED COLON

A 18 JULY 1944 AT 0749 CMA BARKSDALE FIELD CMA LOUISIANA PD

B NO PILOT INVOLVED PD

C ARMAMENT PERSONNEL WAS IN COCKPIT OF THE AIRPLANE PARKED ON RAMP CMA  
OPENING BOMB BAY DOORS WITH THE HAND PUMP PD WHILE PUMPING THE LANDING  
GEAR RETRACTED CATCHING ONE MAN UNDER THE OPEN BOMBAYS IN THE PLANE PD

D ARMAMENT GROUND MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL CMA CECIL L ROBERTS CMA SGT  
CMA AUS CMA 3AF CMA SQUADRON T CMA BARKSDALE FIELD RTU PAREN HB PAREN CMA  
BARKSDALE FIELD CMA LOUISIANA CMA MULTIPLE LACERATIONS OF FACE CMA  
FRACTURE OF NOSE CMA POSSIBLE FRACTURE OF SKULL CMA FRACTURE OF RIGHT  
ANKLE CMA POSSIBLE FRACTURE OF RIGHT HIP PD

E PREFLI

F PREFLIGHT OF AIRPLANE PD

45-17-18-11 1/8

F NO CLOUDS CMA VISIBILITY 2 MILES IN SMOKE AND HAZE CMA WIND N VERY

SLIGHT PD

<sup>A26B</sup>  
G A2/77 CMA AIRPLANE NUMBER 43 DASH 22234 PD

H BARKSDALE FIELD CMA LOUISIANA PD

I PD STRUTS CMA NACELLE DOORS CMA FUSELAGE CMA AND PROPS DAMAGED

J NONE PD

K TURNED OVERT TO DIRECTOR OF MAINTENANCE OPXXXAND SUPPLY CMA 331ST

AAF BASE UNIT PAREN RTU NB PAREN CMA BARKSDALE FIELD CMA OXXXLOUSIANA PD

L NONE PD

M COMMANDING GENERAL AAF NOTIFIED

N GROUP I END

03242

CORR... IN LINE G THE CONFIRMATION OF THIS COPY GIVES IT AS A26B RPT A26B

45-7-18-11

-13-

322



Accident No. 45-7-18-11

Date

Checked by ES 8-4

Analyzed by JLB

Copied for Wright  
Field by J.P.C.

Notes ~~att. Maj. McKnight~~

copy sent to Capt. R. F. Boche 1225:9-43  
29 aug 44

322 ✓